



Which Type of Exercise is Best?

Exercise helps control blood glucose levels because exercising muscle cells use more sugar and oxygen than those at rest. Exercise also helps insulin to work better. Most of the time when you exercise, your blood sugar levels will drop.

There are two main types of exercise: aerobic and anaerobic.

- **Aerobic exercise** is steady exercise over a period of time that causes your body to use more oxygen. It makes your heart and lungs stronger, lowers blood lipids, lowers blood pressure, and uses up blood sugar. Aerobic exercise includes walking briskly, cycling, dancing, swimming, jogging, cross-country skiing, some team sports, and - or course - aerobics.
- **Anaerobic exercise** consists of short bursts of energy that work one part of the body at a time, such as weight lifting. It builds muscles but does not strengthen the heart and lungs. It uses small amounts of blood sugar, but not enough to have much effect on overall blood sugar levels.

Both types are valuable. While aerobic exercise works to lower blood sugar better, the benefits of anaerobic activities such as weight training are important, too. For maximum benefit, aerobic exercise should be done 3 to 5 times a week, for 20 - 30 minutes each time. If you are taking insulin, it's easier to balance your blood glucose levels if you exercise at the same time of day.

Related information ► [Lifestyle - Exercise](#)

Source: Why is exercise important? In Teenagers with Type 1 Diabetes. Michigan Diabetes Research and Training Center, 2000.